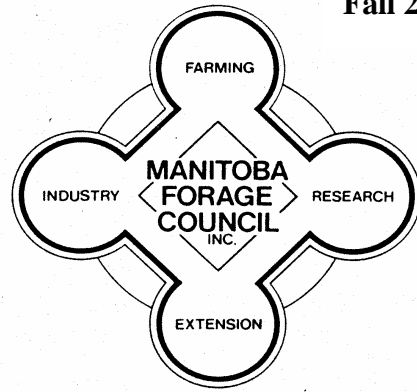


# Forage Focus

Published Quarterly by the Manitoba Forage Council  
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## Manitoba Forage Council Activities

- A new Executive Director has been appointed. Roberta Currah will take on duties of the Manitoba Forage Council, formerly conducted by George Bonnefoy. George will still be a director on the MFC board and has agreed to look after some of the projects such as the Pocket Gopher research program. Fraser Stewart recently retired from Manitoba Agriculture and Food and will act as project coordinator for MFC.
- The MFC has taken on the sponsorship of the Manitoba Grazing School and will handle all the registrations for this event.
- The MFC will be participating in many of the winter Extension activities with a display and an opportunity for Roberta to meet and discuss concerns of Manitoba Forage producers.
- This past summer, MFC was responsible for the financial management of the Forage Variety-Testing program as well as the Stockpile Forage Quality Testing.
- The MFC was a major participant in conjunction with the Manitoba Dairy producers promoting Manitoba at World Dairy Expo in Wisconsin.

### Roberta Currah – Executive Director

Manitoba Forage Council is proud to announce the hiring of Roberta Currah as their new Executive Director starting in September. Roberta comes to us with a Bachelor of Science in Agribusiness with the University of Manitoba. As part of her education she spent a term abroad at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, as an exchange student from the University of Manitoba. She grew up on a commercial cow-calf operation located North-West of Minnedosa. Her experiences involve volunteer time with the Canadian Agri-Marketing Association (CAMA), the Agribusiness Students Association (ABSA), and the Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences Student Organization (FASO). Her work experience includes Dow AgroSciences and Cloutier Agra Seeds Inc.

## George Bonnefoy Retires (again)

George has been an institution in the Manitoba Agriculture industry for almost 50 years. His skills as a speaker at extension meetings and his work in demonstrating new forage and livestock technology are well known throughout Manitoba.

He began his career as a student in 1955 and became the field shelterbelt specialist in 1957 with Manitoba Agriculture and in 1964 moved to the Central Region Soil Specialist position. He was the first Grassland Specialist for the Central Region from 1972 to 1982 and then completed his career with Manitoba Agriculture as a provincial forage specialist in Carman, retiring in 1994. He then took up the job of Executive Director for the Manitoba Forage Council and has been responsible for many of the advances of this organization.

George is well known as a promoter of quality forage for the dairy industry. He developed some excellent grazing management demonstrations at St Claude and was one of the major initiators of the Certified Hay program for Manitoba. The past few years he has been a key supporter of the World Dairy Expo display at Madison and has been responsible for entering some of the top hay samples from this province, which has earned Manitoba the place of being a top quality hay producer. This has helped our exporters in their bid for markets.

Pocket gophers, a major pest of alfalfa producers throughout the province, has been a passion of George and he has initiated a number of excellent research projects to find ways of reducing the effect of this animal on forage stands.

For his second retirement, George will be spending quality time with his three grandchildren as well as doing limited work on some MFC projects.

**Well Done George, all the best in your retirement!**

## Forage Variety Trials

Manitoba Forage Council is taking an active part in the evaluation program of new forage varieties to be registered or recommended for use in Manitoba. This is the second year that MFC has participated in this project. Funding for this program comes from Covering New Ground & ARDI programs as well as individual forage seed companies.

This year, forage varieties are being tested at sites in Arborg, St Pierre and Neepawa. MFC supplies the financial management while the supervision of the test sites is under the direction of Manitoba Agriculture and Food and AGRICORE UNITED.

The project leader is Dave Campbell of Manitoba Agriculture and Food (204 745- 5658) and the test site manager is Stacie Tait who is located at Arborg (ph: 204 376-3314). The 2002 report detailing the results of these tests is available from MFC or from district Manitoba Agriculture and Food offices.

## Forage Web Sites

Manitoba Agriculture and Food has just put a “fresh look” on their Web site plus added a number of new items and links. Take a few minutes to browse the different sections; I am sure you will find it very useful. (<http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/forages/index.html>)

## Manitoba Forage Council Memberships

The 2003 membership fee for the Manitoba Forage Council will remain at \$30. However all those attending the Manitoba Grazing School this year will be given an associate membership in the Manitoba Forage Council. This membership, which is included in the registration fee of the Grazing School, will include the quarterly publications of the Forage Focus but will not include a free hay certification as with the full membership of \$30. This year, all members will have the opportunity to purchase related magazines at a discounted price. The directors felt that since the MFC is now a major sponsor of the Grazing School, direct contact with the producers through the quarterly newsletter would be an opportunity to keep more forage producers better informed of Manitoba Forage issues and concerns.

## Forage Reference Binders

Not sure where to find that bit of information on some aspect of forage technology? Perhaps you need one of the Manitoba Forage Reference binders. These three ring binders are full of some of the best forage extension bulletins and is certainly a handy reference for your office.

Contact Roberta Currah at the MFC office for a copy at a bargain price of \$25 plus postage. There are a few copies left.

## Manitoba Grazing School – December 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> 2002 – Keystone Centre in Brandon

For those interested in grazing systems, an interesting and exciting agenda awaits you at Brandon this year. Again the program committee has done an outstanding job in attracting some keynote speakers in the grazing management field to this conference. Almost half of the speakers are practicing graziers who will share their experiences with you. Specialists such as Fred Provenza of Utah will share his experiences in studying the forage selectivity of the grazing animal. Paul Peterson from Minnesota will discuss some of the new forage species and systems that will put profit into your pastures. A new concept of producing, processing and marketing your grass fed product direct to the consumer will be discussed from a Manitoba concept.

A detailed description of the total agenda is found on the MAF Web site or on pamphlets available at all district MAF offices or from MFC.

Registration for the two days is \$100, which also includes five meals and the proceedings of the conference – a great bargain!!

Following the banquet on Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, the *Annual Manitoba Forage Council Auction* will be held which will be very entertaining but also an opportunity for you to support the activities of the MFC.

## Preliminary List of Consigned Auction Items

### Term Lease Donations

Hesston Forage Harvester – AGCO Corporation  
John Deere 567 Mega Wide Pickup Baler  
Bobcat Central of Manitoba Skid Steer Loader with bucket Model 700 or 800

### Vouchers

Pickseed Canada Voucher for AC Grazeland BR alfalfa  
Promark Seed Voucher for Pasture Mix  
Cloutier Agra Seeds Voucher for Perennial Rye Grass  
Proven Seed Voucher for Gala Alfalfa  
Brett-Young Seeds Voucher for Alfalfa  
Northstar Seeds Voucher for Courtney Tall Fescue  
Johnson Seeds Voucher for Multifoliate Jackpot alfalfa  
MacDon Industries Ltd. Voucher  
Valmar Voucher  
Voucher for SGS Winnipeg Lab Services  
Voucher for Terraco product – Terraco  
Fort Garry Industries certificate for Parts and Service

### Products

Prairie Farm and Ranch Supply - Stock Doctor  
Ayerst Veterinary Lab - Cydectin Pour On  
Munro Farm Supplies - Roundup Transorb  
Custom Truck Sales - Kenworth Leather/Melton Jacket.  
FeedRite - Min-Lix – Rite-Lix Tub  
Merial Canada Inc. - Ivomec Pour On  
Cargill Animal Nutrition - Smartlik Blocks  
Ducks Unlimited Canada - Boot Box  
Powell Ag Equipment – Caterpillar Winter Jacket

## Need To Renovate a Tired Pasture??

A trial was established in 2000 to evaluate the potential of several traditional renovation systems at a pasture site at Tolstoi MB. They may have some answers for you!

The objective of this replicated trial was to evaluate systems of establishing new forage species such as alfalfa, red clover, timothy, tall fescue and meadow brome into a pasture, which consisted primarily of Blue grass and Quack grass.

Systems used included the use of a sod seeder, an airway renovator into which seed was broadcasted, a drag beam that was used to work the seed into the soil and a broadcast system. Additional treatments included the use of phosphate fertilizer and Glyphosate, which were compared to controls where no weed control or additional fertility was applied. Herbicide was applied in the fall and all the seeding was in May 2001.

The plots were evaluated in late July of 2001 and the results indicated the following:

Red clover was the most aggressive of the seeded species, alfalfa was next and the only grass that showed some promise was timothy. There were minimal differences between the application systems with the exception of the drag system, which had lower levels of establishment. However the assessment in 2002 indicated that establishment had improved under the drag system compared to the other systems

Renovation System (May 2001)	% of Total Plant Population (July 2001)		
	Herb.&P.	Herb./no P	Control
Sod Seed	42	44	30
Aerway	36	35	27
Drag	29	39	27
Broadcast	35	46	33

What this project may indicate is that all these systems have some place in the renovation options. However, from experience, we have seen that an evaluation needs to be made over at least a two-year period. An additional assessment is planned for 2003.

This project was initiated and managed by Fraser Stewart, Peter Petrash & Roger Berard of MAF.

### What is Relative Forage Quality and Why is it Requested?

Relative Forage Quality (RFQ) is a new and improved test to help producers calculate the value in the feed they grow. This test is becoming widely used and accepted within the US and many dairy farmers are now requesting imported hay to be tested.

RFQ is a more realistic and accurate calculation of a forage than the old system of Relative Feed Value (RFV).

RFQ reflects more accurately the energy value of the forage as it uses the Total Digestible Nutrient (TDN) value as determined by the new NRC recommendations instead of the Acid Detergent Fibre (ADF) analysis used to determine forage dry mater digestibility (DDM). The

Neutral Detergent Fibre (NDF) is still used to determine forage intake.

Reasons for the changes are that it will more accurately predict animal response to different forages and to a wider range of forages than the old RFV system. Previously the old RFV system was only used for alfalfa and cool season perennial grasses.

Unfortunately, Manitoba labs do not perform this test however you can send your samples to a US Lab. The average price for this test runs between \$10-22 (US) depending on the complexity of the analysis you require. For more information regarding available testing please contact Stearns DHIA Laboratories in Sauk Centre. For more complete technical information and copies of articles contact the Manitoba Forage Council at 889-5699.

### Stockpile Forage Results

Stockpiling is the practice of saving pasture for grazing after the growing season. Generally stockpile pasture is used October through December or the following spring in March or April. So how good is the quality of this stockpiled forage?

For the last two years MB Ag and Food, funded by Covering New Ground, has been trying to answer this question.

Two years of data have shown that a predictable trend occurs. In general you can expect the grasses to lose about 2 percentage points of crude protein (CP) by April and total digestible nutrients (TDN) will drop from 5 to 10% over the same period. Legumes drop in CP and TDN very sharply after mid November and by spring the legumes have lost most of their feed value dropping up to 13 percentage points of CP and 30 percentage points of TDN.

Stockpiling is not the 'be all and end all' it is just one feeding method that can be incorporated into a feeding system to cut winter-feed costs. Our study is showing that stockpiled forage will provide adequate yield and quality for maintaining dry cows in early gestation. Testing will continue this fall.

For nutritional details and top performing varieties please call Jane Thornton, Grassland Specialist, Manitoba Agriculture and Food at 726-6409.

### World Dairy Expo 2002

World Dairy Expo took place October 2-6 in Madison, Wisconsin. The Manitoba Forage Council (MFC) was part of a marketing contingent that worked at the show representing Manitoba forages and dairy cattle.

Our producer representation at Dairy Expo included Dale Thornton of Oakville and Hubert Hummel of Lockport. Thank you for your assistance – we couldn't have done it without you!

MFC is investigating the benefits gained from this event and has asked the producers for their input. This is a summary of their response: Dale said, "I think it's a good thing because it lets the rest of the world know

that Manitoba does have quality products. It's a good place to advertise." Hubert said, "Exposure is everything – you can have the best product but if you're not visible it doesn't matter." World Dairy Expo is an excellent place to make new contacts and network with industry representatives' worldwide. "This was my first time at this event and I was amazed to see how people have grown accustomed to our presence and expect quality information and representation." Currah MFC members who have worked previous years were missed – many acquaintances stopped to inquire about you!

The Manitoba Forage Council will distribute, to its members, copies of the potential buyers information collected throughout the duration of the show. Good quality Manitoba hay generated many questions and buyers took our copies of the Manitoba Hay and Forage Processing Industry directory. A special thank you to producers; Barrie Sigurdson, Cliff Narfason, Irvin Helwer and Jozef Sanders who donated hay that was placed in our display.

#### **2002 World's Forage Analysis Superbowl Finalists**

Congratulations and thank you for representing Manitoba at this competition!

##### *Dairy Hay top 20*

- 17. Delichte Holsteins – St Alphonse
- 18. Rheel Simon and Sons – Notre Dame

##### *Commercial Hay top 20*

- 9. Rheel Simon and Sons – Notre Dame
- 12. Richard Muller – Notre Dame
- 18. Ivan Naylor – Kleeefeld

#### **Manitoba Grazing Clubs**

Grazing Clubs provide producers an opportunity to share information on their experiences and to learn from each other. A concept that has proven successful in other parts of North America is also catching on in Manitoba.

Under the sponsorship of Ducks Unlimited (DU), nine grazing clubs have been formed in Manitoba in the northwestern and central portions of the province.

Michael Thiele of DU at Minnedosa (867-5228) indicates that the clubs have a number of annual activities, which include tours, meetings and this year a major trip to N.Dakota to visit several Holistic Grazing operations.

They also obtain some assistance on their own farms from grazing management specialists in the planning of grazing systems, water facilities and technology required to establish a profitable pasture system.

#### **Forage Focus is the Quarterly newsletter of the Manitoba Forage Council.**

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#### **Annual Meeting Notice**

This year, the Annual Meeting of the Manitoba Forage Council will be held at **7pm on Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>** in the Viewing Lounge at the Keystone Centre adjacent to the Wine and Cheese social for the Grazing School. The business portion will be brief however it will be an opportunity to present some of the new thrusts of MFC for 2003.

#### **Upcoming Events**

- Baldy Mountain Feeder Association Annual Meeting Nov 13 (204-548-2613)
- Livestock Expo November 14-16 Brandon Call 1-877-729-0001 for more information
- Beef and Forage Seminars November 19-21 Roblin, Swan River and The Pas contact Manitoba Ag Office
- 2002 National Conference Canadian Hay Association November 21-22 Calgary (204-768-2781)
- Grasser Workshops Nov 19 Poplarfield, Nov 20 Holland, Nov 21 Grunthal, Dec 17 Minto and Dec 18 Dauphin. For details contact Manitoba Ag Livestock Specialists
- Grazing School December 3-4 Brandon call Roberta at 204- 889-5699
- Eastern Interlake Grazing Seminar Dec 5 Selkirk (204-785-5012)
- Manitoba Conservation Districts Association Annual Conservation Forum December 9-10 Brandon (204-638-9799)
- Manitoba Cattle Producers Association District Meetings call (204-772-4542) to find your meeting location
- Man Ag Days January 14-16 2003 Brandon – Call 204-571-6566 for details
- Beef and Forage Week 2003 –Holland-Jan 20, Eriksdale-Jan 21, Ste. Rose du Lac-Jan 22, Rosa-Jan 22 and 23, Teulon- Jan 24, Birtle-Jan 30 and Rivers-Jan 31 (204-945-5402)

#### **Who are your Directors?**

Ian Wishart – Chairman, Portage  
Clark Combs – Vice Chair, Deloraine  
Gordon Otto, Beausejour  
Fraser Stewart, Selkirk  
Russell Chapman, Virden  
Don Green, MAF, Carman  
Vaughan Greenslade, MAF, Portage  
Richard Heapy, MB Milk Producers, Oak River  
Michael Thiele, Industry Rep., Minnedosa  
Kevin Blight, MB Forage Seed Assoc., Oakville  
Paul McCaughey, Agriculture Canada, Brandon  
Irvin Helwer, Processor Rep., Teulon  
George Bonnefoy, Winnipeg  
Karin Wittenberg, University of Manitoba  
John Hamerton, Manitoba Sheep Producers, Anola

